Event highlights innovative technologies

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The fourth annual DisrupTech event took place in Los Alamos July 12, offering scientists a platform to present their work to businesses and the community.

Hosted by the Lab's Richard P. Feynman Center for Innovation, the New Mexico Angels investor group and New Mexico Start-Up Factory, 11 researchers presented pitches to the 125 attendees and the industry experts and venture investors who made up the judging panel.

“At the Laboratory, our researchers develop technologies that can have tangible benefits to industry and the general public,” said Nancy Jo Nicholas, the Lab's principal associate director of Global Security. “DisrupTech is a unique opportunity to share those emerging technologies and begin exploring how they could be developed and brought to market.”

Named after the famous Manhattan Project physicist, the Feynman Center helps to transition science and technology created at the Laboratory to the private sector.

In 2017, principal investigators at Los Alamos National Laboratory filed 130 patent applications, 92 patents were issued and 43 copyright assertions took place.

L to R: Lab researcher Laura Lilley with John Chavez, president of the New Mexico Angels and Antonio Redondo, director of the Feynman Center. Lilley won the DisrupTech 2018 award for best pitch.

Presenting pitches

Postdoctoral researchers Yuxiang Chen and Laura Lilley won prizes for their outstanding presentations.

Chen won the “Most Fundable Technology” award for his presentation, “NanoCluster Beacons: Fast Testing for Food Safety.” The $25,000 funding award will help Chen improve his technology that quickly and accurately tests pathogens in food.

Lilley received the “Best Pitch” award for her presentation, “Nuclear Antibiotics: Winning the War on Bugs.” Lilley developed a small molecule that destroys microbial agents.

The full list of researchers who presented their work:

- David Baumann presenting: Foldelate: A new approach for the treatment of heavy metal poisoning.

- Ross Beattie presenting: Powering the Next Leap in Quantum Computing: New Rare-Earth Materials for Qubit Development.
- Yuxiang Chen presenting: NanoCluster Beacons: Fast Testing For Food Safety.
- Karla Erickson presenting: Greening Nuclear Fuels.
- Ramesh Jha presenting: Better Enzymes for a Sustainable World.
- Laura Lilley presenting: Nuclear Antibiotics: Winning the War on Bugs.
- David Mascarenas presenting: Augmented Reality for On-The Fly-Tracking of Prescription Drug Inventories.
- Phong Nguyen presenting: Towards Intelligent Oil Wells.
- Kannan Ramaiyan presenting: Cheap and Durable Sensors for Gas Monitoring.
- Emilia Solomon presenting: NMJ-on-a-chip: Treating Neuromuscular Diseases.
- Gang Xie presenting: Microbiome Fingerprints: Fight Food Fraud.

Sponsors of the event included title sponsor EY, as well as the State of New Mexico Economic Development Department, the Regional Development Corporation, the New Mexico Manufacturing Extension Partnership, the Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation, TechNavigator and Emera Technologies.